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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 000599

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR EUR/SE AND AF/E

E.O. 12958: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PHUM PREL

SUBJECT: TURKEY: DEMARCHE ON SUPPORT TO SOMALI'S TFG

REF: SECSTATE 39133

Classified By: POL Counselor Daniel O'Grady, reasons: 1.4(b,d)

¶1. (SBU) We passed REFTEL points to MFA Africa Section Chief, Aykut Kumbaroglu, on April 22. Kumbaroglu reported the Government of Turkey (GOT) will announce a USD one million pledge at the April 23 Donors Conference in Brussels earmarked for programs supporting Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

¶2. (C) Kumbaroglu provided a read-out of Somali President Sheikh Sharif's April 14 visit to Ankara. He said President Sharif and President Gul discussed Turkey's commitment to the TFG. Specifically, Gul praised the new era in Somalia following the election of Sheikh Sharif to the office of the Presidency and Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke to the office of Prime Minister. Gul also announced that the GOT will increase the number (from 10 to 15) of annual scholarships for Somali students to study in Turkish universities. Regarding piracy, Kumbaroglu confirmed that the Turkish frigate "Gerisol" has been participating in a NATO mission in the Gulf of Aden since mid-March. During Sharif's visit to Ankara, the delegations discussed the need to buttress the Somali security services, both on land and at sea, in order to combat this threat. MFA had planned to take the Somali delegation to a Turkish General Staff (TGS) Center for Terrorism during the visit, but scheduling difficulties proved insurmountable. The GOT intends to extend an invitation for Somali policemen to study at the Turkish National Police Academy in Ankara. Kumbaroglu contended that with the visit of Sharif and the pledged financial support, the GOT has demonstrated its strong support for Somalia's nascent TFG.

¶3. (U) This cable replaces Ankara 596.

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Jeffrey